

Office of Congressman Charles W. Dent
Proudly Representing Pennsylvania's 15th District



For Immediate Release
November 18, 2005

Contact: Gregg W. Bortz
610-861-9734 or (cell) 202-222-5118

Dent and colleagues play “The Longest Yard” to benefit families of slain police officers

WASHINGTON, D.C. — On a bleak and rain-soaked November evening, in a town where history is routinely made, U.S. Rep. Charlie Dent (PA-15) joined two dozen of his colleagues in what might go down in history as a half-decent flag-football game, but a strong victory for a great cause.

The event was the first annual “Longest Yard Football Classic,” played Wednesday night to raise money for the Capitol Police Memorial Fund to benefit families of slain officers. Just as in the movie where prison inmates played against the guards in a go-for-broke football game, the “inmates” of Congressional membership lined up on the gridiron to play against the vaunted “guards” — Capitol Police officers.

Even before kickoff, Congressman Dent’s pride shone through the dreary night – not so much from the game itself, but from more than \$3,000 in contributions raised from 15th District sponsors, including PPL Corp., Air Products and Chemicals Inc. and DHL Express. Overall, members of Congress raised more than \$40,000 for the cause.

The contest was organized and played in a bipartisan spirit. Republicans and Democrats joined forces as they took the field at Gallaudet University. Under the leadership of Coach Tom Osborne (NE-3), this “Mean Machine” headed into battle armed with a strategy that included several plays written on sheets of paper. Players were thankful that only one injury was reported during warm-up.

This Members of Congress brought with them an array of athletic talent. Several boasted proud experience in college football. Congressman Dent had seen many football games at Penn State.

The rest of the night would take its place in the annals of football lore as the “Mud Bowl.” By half-time, yard-markers and grass were unrecognizable. The ball was placed on yard lines described as “roughly” where the last play ended.

As cold rain and unforgiving wind beat down upon the gridiron warriors, the competition grew heated. The “inmates” struck first, with U.S. Rep. Jim Gerlach (PA-6) scoring a touchdown with one second on the clock in the first quarter. Dent displayed his prowess as cornerback, making at least one tackle.

But the “guards” would prove a powerful foe, scoring two more times to take a lead late into the game. At the end, the Members of Congress were not to be denied, as Gerlach scored his second touchdown, ultimately forcing a 14-14 stalemate as the final score.

“This game was a win for everybody involved,” Congressman Dent exalted. “I’m grateful to the Capitol Police for the great job they do keeping the Members of Congress, our staffs, our constituents, and our visitors safe. It was an honor to help support them and their families, and I look forward to next year’s match-up.”

###